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## NOTE

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| From:    | General Secretariat of the Council                           |
| To:      | Permanent Representatives Committee/Council                  |
| Subject: | Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034<br>- Policy Debate |

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 16 July and 3 September 2025, the Commission presented its package of proposals on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034. In line with the discussion in the July General Affairs Council (GAC), the Presidency seeks to advance work on the package in a comprehensive manner and as soon as possible.
2. Following a first policy debate in the GAC meeting of 18 July 2025, the Presidency started work at technical level to identify possible elements of the future draft Negotiating Box in the Ad Hoc Working Party on the MFF (AHWP MFF). In parallel, the National and Regional Partnerships, the European Competitiveness Fund and the Global Europe Instrument subgroups started the examination of the non-bracketed elements of the respective proposals, and the Working Party on Own Resources (WPOR) of the proposals on own resources. Moreover, other preparatory bodies started the examination of the non-bracketed parts of the remaining sectoral proposals.

3. To facilitate work at all levels, the Presidency wishes to continue informing Ministers on the examination of the MFF package in the Council. This first report outlines work carried out since GAC on the basis of discussions held in the AHWP MFF between mid-July and early October 2025.
4. On 31 July 2025, in the framework of the AHWP MFF, the Presidency circulated a questionnaire aimed at allowing delegations to share their initial views on the 2028-2034 MFF proposals, clustered around six main themes: structure of the MFF, flexibility, impact and performance, administration, protection of the Union's financial interests and revenue side.
5. Discussions in the AHWP MFF have covered the different thematic, procedural as well as horizontal bracketed aspects of the proposals, often preceded by European Commission explanatory fiches and presentations. Coreper was informed of the work carried out and had a first exchange of views on 24 September 2025. The Commission continues to facilitate work at technical level, in particular providing answers to delegations' comments and questions.
6. On the basis of these discussions, the Presidency identified possible elements for a future draft Negotiating Box, wishing to provide a comprehensive overview of the issues and possible options that need to be further discussed and streamlined at political level. The possible elements for a future draft Negotiating Box are drawn up and developed under the sole responsibility of the Presidency. They are not binding on any delegation.

## **II. STATE OF PLAY IN THE COUNCIL**

7. The AHWP MFF has discussed the horizontal aspects of the MFF proposal as well as bracketed elements of the proposals under Heading 2 ('Competitiveness, Prosperity and Security') for the preparation of the future draft Negotiating Box.
8. The identification of the possible elements for a future draft Negotiating Box remains a work in progress, as these elements will continue to evolve to take account of discussions in the AHWP MFF, WPOR, Coreper and GAC.

9. The Presidency plans to come back to GAC in November to discuss the bracketed elements relating to Heading 1 ('Economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture, rural and maritime prosperity and security'), and in December those related to Headings 3 and 4 ('Global Europe' and 'Administration') and revenue, in order to prepare a first draft negotiating box ahead of the European Council in December.

### **III. QUESTIONS FOR THE MINISTERS**

10. The Presidency has taken note of the comments made by delegations during preparatory discussions. Against this background, Ministers are invited to concentrate on what they consider to be the politically most important issues in replying to the following questions on horizontal aspects and Heading 2 of the MFF proposal:

*Bearing in mind the proposed streamlined structure of the MFF, how can the EU budget efficiently address the objectives of simplification, predictability, impact and responsiveness underpinned by a robust governance structure?*

*The proposals under Heading 2 aim to bolster European competitiveness, prosperity and security. How can we best achieve those objectives?*